

REMARKS

Claim Informalities

Claims 46-47 and 49 were objected to because of informalities. These claims have been cancelled.

Section 112 Objections

Applicant acknowledges the inartful claim language in the prior response which led to the Section 112 rejections. As the Examiner noted, the language used in the prior response was semantically unclear, causing confusion. Applicant believes that the language used in the amended claims overcomes the Section 112 objections.

The prior response attempted to make the point that the communication/messaging system in the present invention is not used for transmitting the images that are acquired by the camera. Consequently, the housing (which is referred to in the specification as the "camera") includes both the transceiver apparatus 125 and a digital image acquisition apparatus 88 for actually taking the digital image, i.e. for taking the picture. See Fig. 7. Applicant has amended the claims to be consistent with the specification: The entire unit is referred to in the specification as a digital camera, with a portion which acquires images ("digital image acquisition apparatus") and a separate portion which is a messaging system (including a "transceiver"). This invention as now claimed is within the scope of the specification, see, e.g., page 3, line 21 to page 5, line 7; page 14, line 11 to page 16, line 4.

Section 103 Rejections

The remaining claims are rejected under Section 103 as patentable over Reele in view of Ilcisin.

Applicant's invention provides a simple communication device through which a camera vendor or retailer can directly communicate to a camera user. The system is not for moving the images acquired by the camera back and forth across a network. Rather, the communication element is independent of the imaging portion of the device. The present invention provides a simple and inexpensive device for communication with a camera user. The invention includes the combination of a traditional digital camera that is intended for acquiring images, and a messaging device that acts as a separate unit from the image acquisition device. Both components are housed in the same physical object. However, the nature of the device is that the imaging data and the messaging data are not shared, thereby facilitating a simple and inexpensive device.

Reele describes a method of transmitting digital images from a camera by combining the camera with a conventional cellular phone. By doing so, Reele teaches a method of "reducing the expense and complexity of the data transmission system in electronic/silver halide capture systems." Reele at col. 1, lines 49-52. The key component in Reele is the integration between the camera and the phone to perform such an activity. In the present invention, images are not transferred, thereby substantially reducing the system's complexity while satisfying a different purpose. In addition, Reele describes a work flow which is always initiated by the camera either automatically or through operator intervention.

Reele does not teach or suggest a photographic system through which the service provider has new means of communication directly with the camera owner, using the integrated

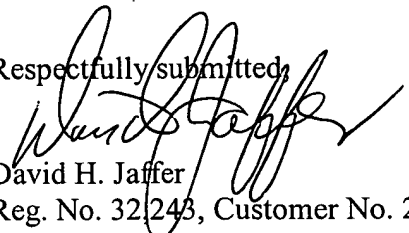
camera unit to provide the communication. The object of the present invention is to provide a system for maintaining communication between a service provider such as a film house, billing center, or camera manufacturer and a camera user. See application at page 3, lines 2-5. This combination is not taught or suggested in Reele or Ilcisin, and adds a new and useful functionality which is not present in the prior art.

Applicant believes the amended independent claims now describe an invention that is not taught or suggested by the prior art, and that the remaining dependent claims add further limitations to allowable claims.

CONCLUSION

Applicants have amended the claims to distinguish them from the prior art cited references and believe the claims now describe a novel and useful invention. If any further questions should arise prior to a Notice of Allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the attorney at the number set forth below.

Respectfully submitted,


David H. Jaffer

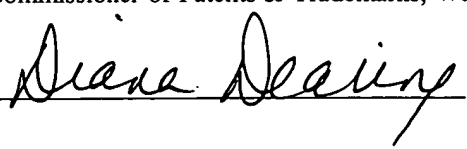
Reg. No. 32,243, Customer No. 27498

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APPENDIX

Version with Markings to Show Changes Made

IN THE CLAIMS

The claims are amended as follows:

Please cancel claims 33-35, 46-47, and 49.

1. (Thrice Amended) An integrated digital camera apparatus comprising:

(a) a housing;

(b) a [camera] digital image acquisition apparatus built into said housing, said [camera for picture taking as with a separate hand held camera, said camera] digital image acquisition apparatus including image capture apparatus for converting a light image to [first] digital image data and image storage apparatus for storing said digital image data [and wherein said camera does not send or receive data to or from a communications network];

(c) a messaging [message] apparatus independent of said digital image acquisition apparatus built into said housing [with message functioning independent of said camera, said message], said messaging apparatus including

(i) transceiver apparatus limited to sending and receiving [second digital data through a communications network and wherein said second digital data is not sent to or received from said camera;] messages through a communications network, said messages not including digital image data from said digital image acquisition apparatus;

- 18 (ii) automatic signal transmission apparatus for automatically causing
19 said transceiver to transmit a message request signal to said message
20 center conveying an identification of said camera apparatus when
21 said transceiver is turned on; and
- 22 (iii) code apparatus for selectively receiving messages sent to said
23 transceiver by a message center.

1 17. (Thrice Amended) A digital camera message system comprising:

- 2 (a) a message center including
- 3 (i) apparatus for collecting, preparing and sorting messages to be sent to
4 a transceiver in an assembly including a digital camera;
- 5 (ii) first communication apparatus responsive to reception of a message
6 request signal conveying a camera identification for transmitting
7 messages to said transceiver; and
- 8 (b) an integrated hand held assembly including
- 9 (i) a housing;
- 10 (ii) a [camera] digital image acquisition apparatus built into said housing,
11 said [camera] digital image acquisition apparatus including image
12 capture apparatus for converting a light image to [first] digital image
13 data and image storage apparatus for storing said digital image data;
14 [and wherein said camera does not send or receive image data to or
15 from a communications network;]

16 (iii) transceiver apparatus limited to [for] sending and receiving [second
17 data, not including said first data, through a communications
18 network, said transceiver apparatus not including said camera;]
19 messages through a communications network, said messages not
20 including digital image data from said digital image acquisition
21 apparatus;

22 (iv) code apparatus including apparatus responsive to a code for
23 selectively processing messages sent to said camera; and

24 (v) automatic signal transmission apparatus for automatically causing
25 said transceiver apparatus to transmit a message request to said
26 message center conveying an identification of said integrated hand
27 held assembly [camera] when said transceiver apparatus is turned on.

1 18. (Twice Amended) A digital camera message system as recited in claim 17 wherein
2 said message center includes a capability to send a selected message to a specific [said] integrated
3 hand held assembly based on said code.

1 19. (Twice Amended) A digital camera message system as recited in claim 17 wherein
2 said message center further includes a capability to send a message simultaneously to a plurality of
3 integrated hand held assemblies by transmitting a [corresponding] particular said code.

1 21. (Twice Amended) A digital camera message system as recited in claim 17 wherein
2 said integrated hand held assembly further includes means for disabling said automatic signal
3 transmission apparatus when a user does not want to receive messages.

1 22. (Twice Amended) A digital camera message system as recited in claim 17 wherein
2 said integrated hand held assembly further includes message display apparatus for displaying said
3 messages.

1 30. (Twice Amended) A digital camera message system as recited in claim 22 wherein
2 said integrated hand held assembly further includes interactive message response apparatus for
3 responding to a question received in a message from said message center.